

REMARKS

I. Status of Claims

By this Amendment, Applicant cancels claims 1, 2, 7, and 8 without prejudice or disclaimer, and amends claims 3-5, 9-11, 20, 21, 24, and 25. Claims 3-5, 9-11, 13-15, 17, 18, and 20-27 remain pending.

In the last Office Action, the Examiner:

- (a) rejected claims 1, 2, 7, 8, 20, 21, 24, and 25 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 5,721,827 ("*Logan*");
- (b) allowed claims 13-15, 17, 18, 22, 23, 26, and 27;
- (c) objected to claims 3-5 and 9-11 for depending upon rejected base claims; and
- (d) indicated claims 3-5 and 9-11 contain allowable subject matter.

Applicant thanks the Examiner for allowing claims 13-15, 17, 18, 22, 23, 26, and 27, and indicating claims 3-5 and 9-11 contain allowable subject matter.

II. Rejection of Claims 1, 2, 7, 8, 20, 21, 24, and 25

Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection of claims 1, 2, 7, 8, 20, 21, 24, and 25 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over *Logan*. However, in order to advance the prosecution of this case, Applicant has canceled claims 1, 2, 7, and 8 without prejudice or disclaimer. Applicant has also amended claims 20, 21, 24, and 25 to depend upon rewritten and allowable claim 4 or 10, respectively. Accordingly, the rejection of claims 1, 2, 7, 8, 20, 21, 24, and 25 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over *Logan* is moot.

Applicant reserves the right to pursue the subject matter recited in original or previously presented claims 1, 2, 7, 8, 20, 21, 24, and 25, at a later time in this application or another application, such as a continuation application.

III. Objection to claims 3-5 and 9-11

Applicant has rewritten claims 3-5 and 9-11 in independent form, including allowable subject matter from claims 3-5 and 9-11. Accordingly, Applicant requests that the Examiner withdraw the objection to claims 3-5 and 9-11 for depending upon rejected base claims, and allow independent claims 3-5 and 9-11.

CONCLUSION

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of this application and the timely allowance of the pending claims.

Applicant notes that the Office Action contains numerous statements reflecting apparent assertions concerning the related art and claims. Regardless of whether any such statement is addressed specifically herein, Applicant declines to automatically subscribe to any assertion and/or characterization set forth in the Office Action.

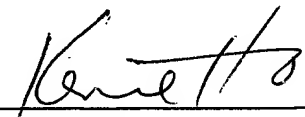
Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees to our deposit account 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: June 21, 2006

By: _____


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